

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to better define the claimed invention, and claim 2 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1 and 3-13 remain pending in the application.

The indication that claims 2 and 4-7 contain allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. In response, independent claim 1 is amended with inclusion of the features recited in previously presented claim 2. Therefore, amended independent claim 1 and claims 4-7 that depend from amended claim 1 are submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 3, and 8-9, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Johnson (US 6,571,166). In response, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is amended to recite substantially the same features recited in previously presented claim 2, which is deemed to contain allowable subject matter. As such, amended independent claim 1 is believed to be patentable over the applied reference. Claims 3 and 8-9 are likewise allowable for at least their dependencies on amended independent claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection under § 102(e) is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Johnson in view of Vandevoorde (US 6,246,342). In response, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 10-13 depend on amended independent claim 1 and are likewise allowable for the same reasons discussed above for claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection under § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Conclusion


All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application should be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is courteously solicited.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Applicant's attorney of record, to facilitate advancement of the present application.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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